

## **WE CLAIM:**

1. A method comprising:

obtaining fingerprint data from a file header associated with a file, the fingerprint data being associated with contents of the file;

checking the integrity of the fingerprint data;

if the check leaves doubt about the fingerprint data thus obtained, then recalculating fingerprint data from contents of the file; and

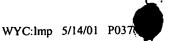
transmitting the fingerprint data to a database.

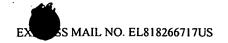
2. The method of claim 1 that includes:

accessing a database record corresponding to the transmitted fingerprint data, to obtain associated information; and

returning at least some of said associated information to a computer device from which the fingerprint data was transmitted.

- 3. The method of claim 1 in which the file contents comprise audio.
- 4. The method of claim 1 in which checking includes checking a digital signature.
- 5. The method of claim 1 in which the checking includes decrypting fingerprint data from the header and authenticating the decrypted data.
- 6. The method of claim 5 that includes applying an inverse modification to the fingerprint in the header prior to said decrypting.
- 7. The method of claim 1 that includes applying an inverse modification to the fingerprint in the header.





## 8. A method comprising:

obtaining watermark data from a file header associated with a file, the watermark data being associated with contents of the file;

checking the integrity of the watermark data;

if the check leaves doubt about the watermark data thus obtained, then detecting watermark data from contents of the file; and

transmitting the watermark data to a database.

## 9. The method of claim 8 that includes:

accessing a database record corresponding to the transmitted watermark data, to obtain associated information; and

returning at least some of said associated information to a computer device from which the watermark data was transmitted.

- 10. The method of claim 8 in which the file contents comprise audio.
- 11. The method of claim 8 in which checking includes checking a digital signature.
- 12. The method of claim 8 in which the checking includes decrypting watermark data from the header and authenticating the decrypted data.
- 13. The method of claim 12 that includes applying an inverse modification to the watermark in the header prior to said decrypting.
- 14. The method of claim 12 that includes applying an inverse modification to the watermark in the header.